



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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The Honorable Anthony Adams
59th Assembly District
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Monday, March 03, 2008

RE: AB 2138 (Adams) as introduced February 20, 2007 – **SPONSOR**

Dear Assemblyman Adams:

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support AB 2138, High School Graduation Requirements bill, as introduced.

AB 2138 would require school districts with high school graduation standards that exceed those established by the State Board of Education to permit foster children who transition to the district during the 11th or 12th grade to meet the State Board of Education graduation requirements, not the standards of their new district.

While a good education is critical to every child's successful transition into adulthood, it is especially true for children who spend long periods of their childhood in foster care. Research indicates that 83 percent of foster children are held back by the third grade, 75 percent are working below grade level, and only 33 percent of foster children will graduate from high school.

California's foster children are all too often moved from placement to placement and from school to school. These constant transitions often result in education-related problems including: loss of school credits; academic problems; and delays in earning a high school diploma. Studies show that high school students who change schools even once are less than half as likely to graduate.

The state sets minimum high school graduation standards for the state's school districts. However, local school districts have flexibility with regards to additional classes students must complete to graduate from their specific high schools.

A foster child who is in high school who has taken the required classes in their previous school district may find that their new high school requires additional classes, over and beyond those they have already taken, to graduate. Completing these new classes would likely not present a problem to a freshman, who would have the time to take the required classes before they graduate. These additional requirements could present a real problem to a foster child who is a junior or senior, and who may not have time to complete these additional classes.

The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.

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As a result, the foster child may not be able to meet graduation requirements. By permitting foster children who transition to a new school district to meet state standards for high school graduation,

Sincerely,

PAUL BIANE

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

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